

*Draft*  
*September 26, 2003*

**Draft Policy and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)  
Using Public Volunteers to Help Control Alien Ungulates at Kahuku**

**Objective**

The objective of this Policy and SOP is to establish a legal and effective basis for involving the public safely in an alien animal control program. This is a first draft and may change with public input and experiences in the first months of the program. The latest version will be posted to the park's website ([www.nps.gov/havo](http://www.nps.gov/havo)).

**Policy**

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park's enabling legislation (16 USC. Sec. 396) (Pub Law 95-635, 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1132), which established the Park, states that the Park *"shall be perpetually dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the United States..."* It provides for the *"preservation from injury of all timber, birds, mineral deposits, and natural curiosities or wonders within said park, and their retention in their natural conditions as nearly as possible."* The Park's enabling legislation also prohibits hunting: *"That all hunting or the killing, wounding, or capturing at any time of any wild bird or animal, except dangerous animals when it is necessary to prevent them from destroying human lives or inflicting personal injury, is prohibited within the limits of said park."*

Park Service Management Policies (2001) require control of alien species: *"All exotic plant and animal species that are not maintained to meet an identified park purpose will be managed— up to and including eradication— if (1) control is prudent and feasible, and (2) the exotic species: ...interferes with natural processes and the perpetuation of natural features, native species or natural habitats; or disrupts the genetic integrity of native species"* (Section 4.4.4.2). ). *"Native species' are defined as all species that have occurred or now occur as a result of natural processes on lands designated as units of the national park system. Native species in a place are evolving in concert with each other. "Exotic species" are those species that occupy or could occupy park lands directly or indirectly as the result of deliberate or accidental human activities. Exotic species are also commonly referred to as non- native, alien, or invasive species."* (Section 4.4.1.3). *"The Service will use the best available technology, within available resources, to restore the biological and physical components of these systems, accelerating both their recovery and the recovery of landscape and biological community structure and function. Efforts may include, for example, removal of exotic species."* (Section 4.1.5).

Administrative hunting, by park staff or public volunteers, is an acceptable practice as a resource management tool used to carry out mandated control and eradication programs. The long-term goal of the control program is to remove all alien ungulates from the park to allow the maintenance and restoration of native species.

In almost all areas of Kahuku, the park will begin control efforts with public hunting. As hunter interest declines in individual control units, staff hunting will commence.

## **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**

1. All public participants will be signed up as park volunteers and work only under the direction of park employees.
2. If there are more requests for hunting than available openings, public participants will be selected by lottery.
3. In most areas of Kahuku, Park staff will lead public participants in guided, systematic hunts in units selected by park staff.
4. In selected areas (see **Hunting Areas** section below), public hunters, working as park volunteers, may hunt without park guides, per prior arrangement with the Park Service.
5. Guided hunts will take place on weekends, holidays, and possibly week days as arranged and depending on staff availability.
6. All hunting will be conducted with a rifle.

## **Guided Hunting**

In most areas of Kahuku, strategically organized hunts, relying on systematic sweeps, will have the greatest impact on ungulate populations. There are other advantages to organized, guided hunts. These will be the safest in terms of the hunting and non-hunting visitor and will not disrupt the ranching operation. Guided hunting assures that control work will be done in priority control areas. Guides will also be hunting and may know the area better than public hunters, who may be unfamiliar with the terrain which has been inaccessible to the public. Guides will help take care of vehicle break downs and medical emergencies. Guided hunts can be scheduled to avoid conflicts with non-hunting park visitors. Guides will assure a high quality of data on animal control.

## **Requirements to Participate**

The following are required of the public to participate in the program:

- State hunting license
- Hunter safety course
- Registered four-wheel drive vehicle
- Registered firearm

## **Lottery System**

Should it be needed, the lottery will be announced in Big Island local newspapers and through the hunting clubs and the Division of Forestry and Wildlife. It will be available to all Hawaii residents and the general public. The drawing will be public. Provisions will be made with the potential to accommodate repeat applicants.

## **Data Collection**

Park guides will collect hunting data about date, name, area, time, species killed, sex, and juvenile/adult. In some cases, public hunters may be asked to fill out data sheets and return them to park guides.

## **Target Animals**

Mouflon Sheep  
Feral Goats  
Feral Pigs  
Feral Sheep  
Feral Cattle

The greatest initial interest will be in mouflon sheep. Feral goats may be encountered while hunting for mouflon sheep and are to be removed. Feral pig hunting with dogs will be conducted at different times than sheep hunting to avoid conflicts. Feral cattle are present mauka of the pastures (above 5,000-foot elevation). Hunting for feral cattle will be also be arranged separately from other hunts.

## **Hunting Areas**

The participation of the public in control programs will vary by area of the park.

Pastures: Initially ranch staff only will be allowed to hunt in the pastures because of the potential for shooting cattle. Allowing ranch staff to guide guests will be considered over time, but not for profit. Control by park staff will be started over time. When the ranching activity ceases, the pastures will be ideal for public control efforts.

Koa Restoration Area above Honomolino: Hunts in this area will be coordinated by Charlie Wakida, as part of the Park Service/Damon Estate Koa Restoration Plan, so that hunting effectiveness is not compromised. Mr. Wakida is a contractor for Damon Estate and a park volunteer.

Southeast Slope above Kau and Kapapala Forest Reserves: This area will be available to guided public hunts accessible from Highway 11. No hunting will be allowed in the DOFAW cabin area because of its potential as a sheep study site.

Northwest corner of Kahuku: Access is limited by private lands adjoining the park. Employees from adjacent ranches will be allowed to hunt but not serve as paid guides.

Ainapo Trail Access: Access without park guides from Ainapo Trail will be allowed for day use only.

## **Safety**

A Job Hazard Analysis will be completed by park staff to address all hazards. Safety briefings will be given prior to each hunt.

## **Access to Ka`u and Kapapala Forest Reserves**

Access is currently allowed to the lower Ka`u Forest Reserve from Lorenzo Road and to Kapapala via Ainapo Trail area. Protocols for access to the upper Ka`u Forest Reserve and the west section of Kapapala Forest from Kahuku will be developed.